Oregon State University Forestry Cooperative Education Program

Connecting Classroom Education to Practical Work Experience for the Professional Forest Management Programs at Oregon State University

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OSU College of Forestry Departmental Structure

Departments	Degree Programs
Forest Engineering, Resources & Management	Forest Engineering
	Forest Operations Mgmt
	Forest Management
Forest Ecosystems & Society	Natural Resources
	Recreation Resource Mgmt
Wood Science & Engineering	Wood Science & Technology

Departmental Undergraduate Program Structure

Degree Program	Target Cooperators
Forest Engineering	Forest Industry Forest Agencies
Forest Operations Management	Forest Industry Forest Consultants
Forest Management	Forest Agencies Forest Conservation

Current OSU COF Student Work Requirement

- Current work requirement
  - 6 months or 960 hours of forestry-related experience
  - Documented via employer evaluations of student performance
- Typical job search/placement strategies
  - Advising
  - Jobs website
  - Career Fair
  - Newsletters
  - Word of Mouth

Engineering Coop Education at OSU

- 110 Employers throughout the state
- 375 Interns placed in 2008
- 260 Interns placed in 2009
- Weyerhaeuser Company already a member/employer

OSU | PSU | OIT

MECOP MULTIPLE ENGINEERING CO-OP PROGRAM

CECOP CIVIL ENGINEERING CO-OP PROGRAM

Co-op Program Structure

Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term	**First Summer Employment**
Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term	**Second Summer Employment**
Fall Term	Winter Term	**First CO-OP Employment**	**First CO-OP Employment**
Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term	**Second CO-OP Employment**
Second CO-OP Employment	Winter Term	Spring Term	

Program Logistics

- Students apply for program entry
- Employers post jobs with learning outcomes
- Employers interview
- Students and employers rank each other
- Students placed
- Faculty oversight and assistance

Integration into Curricula

- Curricula designed to permit co-op experiences and co-op applicable learning outcomes at appropriate times
- Curricular decisions informed by Advisory Board
- Focus on communication and problem solving throughout curricula
- Students receive job readiness training through core-competency workshops
- Student deliverables include papers, posters and presentations

Benefits of Co-op Education to Students

- Work experience to build skills and résumé
- Exploration into potential career paths
- Increased structure and guidance in job search/ placement
- Opportunities for networking
- Increased communication and problem solving skills
- Increased professionalism and confidence
- Classroom experience more meaningful

Other Benefits of Co-op Education

- Challenge faculty to be more engaged in teaching that is relevant and timely
- Forces intentional design of curricula to be graduated and purposeful
- Develop and improve upon existing College/ stakeholder connections
  - Advisory Board
  - Public relations
  - Conversations have led to other opportunities
  - Social capital building

Preliminary Assessment Results

- 20 potential cooperators interviewed
  - Industry, Agency, NGOs, small family businesses
- Listening-centered approach
- Key themes from interviews
  - Technical skills
  - Expect graduated skill development
  - GPA as a baseline only
  - 4 C's and an A
    - Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creative Problem Solving, Conflict Negotiation
    - Attitude

Challenges and Goals for the Future

- Key Challenges
  - Employer preference for same student every summer to allow “grooming”
  - Employer preference for hiring student directly following last work term
  - Design of curricula to accommodate participating and non-participating students
  - Design of co-op program to accommodate transfer students
- Continued employer and student assessment
- Implementation for summer 2011

Co-op Presentation Night at UBC